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E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: PGOV, KS, US
SUBJECT: ASSISTANT ATTORNEY GENERAL CIVILETTI'S PRESS COMMENTS RE TONGSUN PARK

1. FOLLOWING ARE NOVEMBER 10 PRESS STORIES REPORTING SUBJECT COMMENTS.

2. WASHINGTON POST

QUOTE
ON ANOTHER TOPIC, CIVILETTI SAID THE JUSTICE DEPARTMENT HAS HEARD NOTHING BUT "NOISE" FROM THE SOUTH KOREAN GOVERNMENT ABOUT ANY AGREEMENT TO ALLOW ACCUSED SECRET AGENT TONGSUN PARK TO BE QUESTIONED BY FEDERAL PROSECUTORS.

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HE SAID THE DEPARTMENT WAS WILLING TO GIVE PARK IMMUNITY FROM PROSECUTION IN RETURN FOR HIS TRUTHFUL TESTIMONY ABOUT CASH PAYMENTS HE MADE TO MEMBERS OF CONGRESS. PARK ALSO WOULD HAVE TO BE WILLING TO TESTIFY PERSONALLY AT ANY FUTURE TRIALS STEMMING FROM THE CRIMINAL INVESTIGATION OF SOUTH KOREAN INFLUENCE BUYING IN CONGRESS, HE ADDED.

CIVILETTI ATTRIBUTED THE KOREAN GOVERNMENT'S RELUCTANCE SO FAR TO COOPERATE TO CONCERNS ABOUT APPEARING TO BE "ON BENDED KNEE TO BIG BROTHER (THE U.S.)" AND TO FEARS THAT "IF HE (PARK) COMES BACK AND TELLS THE TRUTH ABOUT HIS ACTIVITIES IN THE U.S. IT (THE SCANDAL) WILL JUST GET WORSE." END QUOTE.

3. WASHINGTON STAR

QUOTE
ANY AGREEMENT WITH THE SOUTH KOREAN GOVERNMENT INVESTIGATION OF ALLEGED INFLUENCE-BUYING MUST INCLUDE A PLEDGE BY TONGSUN PARK TO RETURN TO THE UNITED STATES TO TESTIFY IN CRIMINAL TRIALS OF U.S. OFFICIALS, THE GOVERNMENT'S CHIEF PROSECUTOR SAID TODAY.

REACTING TO PUBLISHED REPORTS THAT AN ACCORD WITH THE PARK CHUNG HEE GOVERNMENT IN SEOUL IS CLOSE, BENJAMIN CIVILETTI, HEAD OF THE JUSTICE DEPARTMENT'S CRIMINAL

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DIVISION, SAID THAT THUS FAR THERE HAS BEEN NO SUCH CONCESSION EITHER BY SEOUL OR TONGSUN PARK HIMSELF. THERE IS "NO AGREEMENT OF ANY KIND OR ANY NATURE."
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CIVILETTI SAID AT A BREAKFAST MEETING WITH REPORTERS, SPECULATIVE ACCOUNTS FROM THE SOUTH KOREAN CAPITAL AND WASHINGTON IN RECENT DAYS SUGGESTED THAT THE KOREANS HAD AGREED TO ALLOW U.S. PROSECUTORS TO QUESTION PARK IN THE CASE. POSSIBLY IN A THIRD COUNTRY.
WITHOUT CONFIRMING DIRECTLY THAT SUCH AN OFFER HAS BEEN RECEIVED BY HIS DEPARTMENT, CIVILETTI STRESSED THIS MORNING THAT IT WAS "NOT TERRIBLY IMPORTANT" WHERE AN INITIAL INTERROGATION OF PARK TAKES PLACE.
THE BOTTOM LINE ON ANY AGREEMENT, HE ASSERTED, IS THAT PARK MUST BE AVAILABLE TO RETURN TO THE UNITED STATES TO TESTIFY IN ANY CRIMINAL PROCEEDINGS STEMMING FROM THE GOVERNMENT'S YEAR-LONG INVESTIGATION OF THE ACTIVITIES OF SOUTH KOREAN OPERATIVES HERE.
CIVILETTI REITERATED THAT IN EXCHANGE FOR SUCH AN AGREEMENT, THE JUSTICE DEPARTMENT WOULD AGREE TO DROP THE 36-COUNT BRIBERY AND RACKETEERING INDICTMENT AGAINST PARK AND TO IMMUNIZE HIM FROM FEDERAL PROSECUTION.
THE PROSECUTOR ADDED THAT THERE WAS AN "UNDERLYING ASSUMPTION" THAT THE SOUTH KOREAN GOVERNMENT ALSO WOULD DROP ANY CHARGES IT MIGHT BE CONSIDERING AGAINST PARK, BUT HE SAID THAT ASPECT HAS NOT FORMALLY BEEN SPELLED OUT BY SEOUL.
ASKED TODAY IF HE WAS OPTIMISTIC THAT A DEAL STILL CAN BE MADE WITH SOUTH KOREA AND THE FUGITIVE BUSINESSMAN, CIVILETTI SAID U.S. OFFICIALS HAVE "HEARD NOISES FOR THREE OR FOUR MONTHS THAT HAVE ENCOURAGED US."
HE NOTED THAT PARK'S CRIMINAL LAWYER IN THE UNITED STATES, WILLIAM HUNDLEY, HAS RECOMMENDED THAT PARK ACCEPT THE JUSTICE DEPARTMENT'S OFFER OF IMMUNITY
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IN EXCHANGE FOR TESTIMONY IN THE CRIMINAL INVESTIGATION. CIVILETTI SAID THE JUSTICE DEPARTMENT IS EXPECTING TO RECEIVE WITHIN THE NEXT DAY OR TWO THE SOUTH KOREAN GOVERNMENT'S LATEST COUNTER-OFFER IN THE CASE.
END QUOTE. VANCE
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